

WHAT IS CLAIMED:

1. A method of making a durable nonwoven fabric comprising the steps of:

- a) providing a precursor web;
- b) providing a three-dimensional image transfer device;
- c) hydroentangling said precursor web on said image transfer device to form a patterned and imaged nonwoven fabric;
- d) applying a pre-dye finish to said nonwoven fabric to impart high abrasion resistance, followed by curing of said pre-dye finish; and
- e) dyeing of said nonwoven fabric.

2. A method of making a durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 1, said precursor web comprising layers of polyester fibers.

3. A method of making a durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 1, said precursor web comprising layers of polyester and nylon fibers

4. A method of making a durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 1, said precursor web is hydroentangled on a foraminous surface prior to said step of hydroentangling said web on said image transfer device.

5. A method of making a durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 1, said pre-dye finish comprising a melamine cross-linking resin.

6. A method of making a durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 1, said fabric is dyed by the method selected from the group consisting of jet dyeing, pad dyeing, screen printing, transfer printing, and the combinations thereof.

7. A method of making a durable nonwoven fabric comprising the steps of:

- a) providing a precursor web;
- b) providing a three-dimensional image transfer device;
- c) hydroentangling said precursor web on said image transfer device to form a patterned and imaged nonwoven fabric;
- d) applying a pre-dye finish to said nonwoven fabric to impart high abrasion resistance, followed by curing of said pre-dye finish;

e) dyeing of said nonwoven fabric;
f) applying a post-dye finish to said nonwoven fabric to impart high abrasion resistance, followed by curing of said post-dye finish.

5 8. A method of making a durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 7, said post-dye finish comprising a cross-linking resin.

9. A method of making a durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 8, said post-dye finish comprising a carbodimide cross-linking resin.

10. A method of making a durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 8, said post-dye finish comprising a polycarbonate cross-linking resin.

10 11. A method of making a durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 8, said post-dye finish comprising a mix of polycarbonate and carbodimide cross-linking resins.

12. A durable nonwoven fabric, comprising:

a) a precursor web;

15 b) said precursor web being imaged and patterned by hydroentanglement on a three-dimensional image transfer device to form a nonwoven fabric;

c) said nonwoven fabric receiving a substantially uniform application of a pre-dye finish followed by a curing step;

20 d) dyeing of said nonwoven fabric;

e) the resulting nonwoven fabric exhibiting a Martindale Abrasion Value of at least 50,000 cycles, a combined drupe value of less than 2.45 grams force per gram fabric weight and a combined bend value of less than 0.42 milligram-centimeter per mil thickness.

25 13. A method of making a durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 12, said precursor web comprising layers of polyester fibers.

14. A method of making a durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 12, said precursor web comprising layers of polyester and nylon fibers

15. ~~A durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 12, said nonwoven fabric exhibiting a final basis weight of between about 2.0 ounces and about 6.0 ounces.~~

5 16. A durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 12, said nonwoven fabric exhibiting a final basis weight of between about 3.0 ounces and about 4.0 ounces.

17. A durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 12, said nonwoven fabric exhibiting a color fastness under wet test conditions of at least 5.

10 18. A durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 12, said nonwoven fabric exhibiting a color fastness under dry test conditions of at least 5.

19. A durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 12, said nonwoven fabric exhibiting a combined Elmendorf tear value of at least about 32 grams force per gram fabric weight.

15 20. A durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 12, said nonwoven fabric exhibitng an absorbency of at least about 0.25 percent capacity per second per gram fabric weight.

21. A durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 12, said nonwoven fabric is further processed by receiving a substantially uniform application of a post-dye finish

20 22. A durable nonwoven fabric as in claim 12, said nowoven fabric is used in the fabrication of apparel.